

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 051213
ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 ARA-06 PM-04 DODE-00 CIAE-00
L-03 ACDA-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06
TRSE-00 NSC-05 /070 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RAR: E H HYMAN:JMT
APPROVED BY INR/DDR: M PACKMAN
INR/RAR: H L ESTEP
EUR/RPM: J MARESCA/T SAVAGE
ARA/AND: J ALLITTO
EUR/SOV: D HERSPRING
PM/SAS: D J JAMES
DIA: C W SMITH

-----082308Z 077738 /70

P R 082118Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO OIC PIC
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 051213

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR

SUBJECT:

PASS FOLLOWING VIA THE NATO-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
PP RFWFA RFWFB RFWFD RFWFE RFWF F RFWFG RFWFH RFWFI RFWFK
RFWFL RFWFM RFWFN RFWFO RFWFP RFWFQ RFWFR RFWFZ
DE RFWFS 051213 0672215
ZNY CCCCC
P R 082118Z MAR 7
FM WASHINGTON
TO AIG 6006
AIG 6007
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 051213

B T
NATO CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL FROM WASHINGTON
NADA/ASSESSMENT/MAR 03/MFA WASHINGTON

SUBJECT: NATO ASSESSMENT SERIES CONTRIBUTION

1. THE ECUADOREAN GOVERNMENT, DESPITE ITS RESENTMENT AT

THE RECENT US VETO ON AN ISRAELI SALE OF KFIR FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO ECUADOR, REPORTEDLY HAS DECIDED AGAINST TURNING TO THE SOVIETS ALTHOUGH THAT SOURCE REMAINS AN OUTSIDE POSSIBILITY. THE REPORTED DECISION REPRESENTS A REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF THE PROS AND CONS OF DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS.

2. ECUADOR'S PROCUREMENT PROBLEMS. ECUADOR, WHICH STILL REFUSES TO ACCEPT ITS LOSS OF AMAZON TERRITORY TO PERU A QUARTER CENTURY AGO, FEARS RENEWED AGGRESSION AS PERU MODERNIZES AND EXPANDS ITS ARMED FORCES WITH SOVIET ASSISTANCE. THE ECUADOREAN GOVERNMENT IS NOW PUSHING MILITARY MODERNIZATION, PARTICULARLY AIR DEFENSES, TO COUNTER PERU'S ADDITION, DURING 1977, OF TWO SQUADRONS OF SU-22 HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMBAT AIRCRAFT TO ITS GROWING INVENTORY OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT.

3. IN SEARCH OF AN INTERCEPTOR CAPABLE OF MATCHING THE SU-22, THE ECUADOREAN AIR FORCE IN EARLY FEBRUARY CHOSE THE ISRAELI KFIR, POWERED WITH GE ENGINES, ONLY TO HAVE THE DEAL FALL THROUGH WHEN THE US VETOED THE SALE. ECUADOR'S ACCESS TO THE US'S HAWK SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE, IN WHICH IT HAS SHOWN INTEREST, AND THE NORTHROP F-5E FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, WHICH IT HAS ALSO EYED, IS CONTINGENT ON US GOVERNMENT APPROVAL. THESE PROBLEMS ARE PART OF CONTINUING DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY ECUADOR DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS IN ESTABLISHING RELIABLE ACCESS TO SUPPLIERS WHO CAN MAKE EARLY DELIVERY ON EQUIPMENT THAT WILL PRODUCE WHAT THE MILITARY PERCEIVE AS A CREDIBLE DEFENSE SYSTEM.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 051213

4. AFTER THE KFIR DECISION, ANGER AND RESENTMENT AT US REFUSAL TO SELL OR PERMIT SALE OF VARIOUS KINDS OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS CAUSED EVEN PRO-US MODERATE LEADERS OF THE MILITARY REGIME TO TALK OPENLY OF TURNING TO THE USSR FOR FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. WHILE THE GOVERNMENT REPORTEDLY HAS DECIDED AGAINST APPROACHING THE SOVIETS, THAT SOURCE REMAINS AN OUTSIDE POSSIBILITY FOR THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY AS THEY NEGOTIATE TO BUY ARMS. SOVIET EQUIPMENT MAY SEEM INCREASINGLY ATTRACTIVE IN COMING MONTHS AS ARMS MISSIONS ENCOUNTER PREDICTABLE FRUSTRATIONS IN TRYING TO GET DELIVERY OF DESIRED EQUIPMENT FROM WESTERN SUPPLIERS.

5. OPPORTUNITY BECKONS. MOTIVATIONS ON BOTH SIDES WHICH MIGHT FAVOR DEVELOPMENT OF A SOVIET-ECUADOREAN MILITARY AID RELATIONSHIP INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

(A)--THE SOVIETS CAN MAKE RAPID DELIVERY OF TYPES OF EQUIPMENT THAT THE ECUADOREANS ARE SEEKING--ARTILLERY, MISSILES, HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMBAT AIRCRAFT, MISSILE

BOATS, AND AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEMS.

(B)--THE ECUADOREAN ARMED FORCES WANT TO EXPAND AND MODERNIZE THEIR ARMS INVENTORIES AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE NOT

ONLY TO IMPROVE EXTERNAL DEFENSES BUT ALSO TO EFFECT A MILITARY BUILD-UP WHILE THEY HAVE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND OIL REVENUES ARE FLOWING.

(C)--TO THE SOVIETS, THE DIFFICULTIES OF ECUADOR IN FINDING RELIABLE SUPPLIERS OF DESIRED EQUIPMENT PRESENT AN OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN ENTREE INTO AND EVENTUAL INFLUENCE WITH THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY, WITH ITS KEY ROLE IN NATIONAL POLITICS AND THE EVOLUTION OF SOVIET TIES.

(D)--ACQUIRING ECUADOR AS A MILITARY AID CLIENT WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 051213

ADVANCE THE USSR'S MILITARY AID PRESENCE IN SOUTH AMERICA BEYOND ITS PRESENT LONE OUTPOST IN PERU.

(E)--AS A SUPPLIER OF ARMS TO ECUADOR, MOSCOW MIGHT GET ADDITIONAL LEVERAGE IN HANDLING MILITARY AID RELATIONS WITH PERU.

(F)--A SOVIET MILITARY AID RELATIONSHIP WITH ECUADOR'S CONSERVATIVE REGIME WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO OTHER LATIN AMERICAN MILITARIES SOVIET EVENHANDEDNESS AND READINESS TO WORK WITH MANY SHADES OF POLITICAL OPINION IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENTS ASSERTING THEIR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE VIS-A-VIS THE US.

(G)--THE USSR'S STEPPING IN TO SUPPORT THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY IN THEIR TIME OF NEED WOULD OVERCOME A GENERAL OPPOSITION WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES TO CLOSER SOVIET TIES.

6. UNDERLYING PROBLEMS REMAIN. FACTORS CONDITIONING AND LIMITING DEVELOPMENT OF A SOVIET-ECUADOREAN MILITARY AID RELATIONSHIP ARE ALSO SUBSTANTIAL.

(A)--ECUADOREAN POLITICS ARE SO UNSTABLE AS TO COUNSEL AGAINST A SOVIET MILITARY AID INVESTMENT FOR A LONG HAUL, LIKE THE ONE BEING MADE IN PERU. THE MILITARY NOW IN CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN UNFRIENDLY TO THE SOVIETS.

(B)--THE ECUADOREAN ARMED FORCES ARE DISUNITED AND WEAKLY LED. IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY THAT HAVE

MODERATE, PRO-US VIEWS COULD INTERFERE WITH A SOVIET-ECUADOREAN MILITARY AID RELATIONSHIP.

(C)--ECUADOR'S CONFLICT SITUATION, WHICH MOTIVATES THE SEARCH FOR ARMS, IS ALSO ADVERSE TO A MILITARY AID
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 051213

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIETS: ITS ENEMY, PERU, IS THE FRIEND OF THE SOVIETS, AND ITS CHIEF FRIEND, CHILE, IS THE ENEMY OF THE SOVIETS.

(D)--ECUADOR WANTS A COMPLETE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM TO COUNTERBALANCE PERU, INCLUDING HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT AND SURFACE-TO-AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS WITH ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT.

(E)--THE SOVIETS COULD BE HARRIED BY PERUVIAN OBJECTIONS AND ALSO BE SUSPECT TO THE ECUADOREANS; BOTH SIDES WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE DOUBTFUL RELIABILITY OF SUPPLY IN EVENT OF A WAR CRISIS.

7. SOVIET OFFER LIKELY. THE SOVIETS MIGHT SEE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN DRIVING A PERU-ECUADOR MILITARY AID "COUPLE" IN TANDEM THOUGH THEY HAVE MANAGED TO SUPPLY OTHER PAIRS OF MUTUALLY HOSTILE STATES, E.G., IRAN/IRAQ, EGYPT/LIBYA, ETHIOPIA/SOMALIA, THE TWO YEMENS. SIGNIFICANTLY, NO SOVIET-ECUADOREAN DISCUSSIONS ON ARMS HAVE BEEN REPORTED SINCE 1973, WHEN SOVIET MILITARY AID TO PERU ENTERED A SERIOUS STAGE.

8. IF APPROACHED BY THE ECUADOREAN AIR FORCE, THE SOVIETS WOULD PROBABLY NOT OFFER WEAPONS SYSTEMS COMPARABLE TO THOSE SUPPLIED TO PERU. NEVERTHELESS, THEY WOULD PROBABLY NOT REJECT AN ECUADOREAN APPROACH OUT OF HAND. THEY MIGHT RESPOND IN A LOW-KEY MANNER, SEEKING TO DEVELOP A MILITARY AID OPENING THAT WOULD SATISFY ECUADOR AND YET NOT DRIVE PERU TO COOL OFF RELATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY MIGHT OFFER THE ECUADOREANS SOME AID ON GENEROUS TERMS IN THE FORM OF "DEFENSIVE" WEAPONRY, E.G., ANTI-TANK WEAPONS, SMALL ARMS, AND POSSIBLY SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES OR LESS ADVANCED INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT, AND PRESENT THIS TO THE PERUVIANS AS POSING NO THREAT TO THEM. EVEN IN SUCH A MODEST PACKAGE, ECUADOR WOULD NEED CONSIDERABLE TRAINING TO COPE WITH THE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY INCLUDED. MOSCOW WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 06 STATE 051213

CERTAINLY SEEK SOME ADVANTAGES FROM ECUADOR, PERHAPS LONG

SOUGHT-AFTER AEROFLOT LANDING RIGHTS AND EXCHANGE OF
MILITARY ATTACHES FOR OPENERS.

9. ECUADOR UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT. FEELINGS OF INDIGNATION
WILL CONTINUE TO RANKLE THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY, AND THEY
WILL PROBABLY BE FURTHER IRRITATED BY NEW US RESTRAINTS ON
ARMS TRANSFERS. IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF RESENTMENT PRODUCED

BY SUCH US DECISIONS AS THE RULING ON THE KFIR, THE
ECUADOREANS COULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER A SOVIET MILITARY
AID TIE, IF ONLY TO ASSERT NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE VIS-A-
VIS THE US. HOWEVER, WHAT WOULD BE FEASIBLE FROM A SOVIET
AND PERUVIAN POINT OF VIEW--MUCH LESS THAN WEAPONS SYSTEMS
SUFFICIENT TO COUNTERBALANCE THE SU-22'S DUE TO BE
DELIVERED TO PERU AND ASSOCIATED SOVIET EQUIPMENT--WOULD
PROBABLY NOT BE ACCEPTABLE IN THE EYES OF THE ECUADOREANS.
IT WOULD NOT SATISFY THEIR URGENT SECURITY AND MODERNIZA-
TION NEEDS AND HENCE WOULD NOT OVERRIDE OPPOSITION WITHIN
THE MILITARY TO BECOMING INVOLVED WITH THE SOVIETS.

10. HENCE, EVEN IF TYPES OF EQUIPMENT, DELIVERY DATES,
AND TERMS OF PAYMENT OFFERED BY WESTERN SUPPLIERS ARE
UNSATISFACTORY, UNDER ITS PRESENT MILITARY LEADERSHIP
ECUADOR WILL PROBABLY VIEW A MILITARY AID RELATION WITH
THE SOVIETS AS A LAST RECOURSE.
VANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PROCUREMENT, FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE051213
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: E H HYMAN:JMT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770080-0223
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770381/aaaactis.tel
Line Count: 250
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fe1dfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3173401
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO ASSESSMENT SERIES CONTRIBUTION
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, EC, IS, UR, NATO
To: OIC PIC NATO POSTS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fe1dfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009